



Western's long, bitter civil war

By WARREN GERARD

LONDON, Ont.—The faculty and the administration at the University of Western Ontario are engaged in a long, bitter war of attrition.

The faculty charges that the administration is 'parochial, paternal, autocratic and complacent' and as a result the university is a "colorless institution."

The administration has been frankly baffled and until recently has fought the faculty with aloof silence. It has answered the gentle proings of the London Free Press with a flurry of no comments, all of which have been faithfully reported.

The faculty wants a bigger say in the university operation, a reorganized board of governors and a reorganized senate.

It wants to negotiate, as a union would, with the administration for salaries, pensions, tenure, retirement, study leave, and all conditions of employment.

But what the faculty most wants is a share in the government of the university.

The administration has found it can no longer ignore faculty demands, and various committees have been established to study the issues. But the faculty is not convinced that the new administration tactics will accomplish anything.

The faculty demands are angrily presented in three briefs written by professors. Two have been submitted to the Duff-Berdahl commission on Canadian university government, an inquiry financed by a \$50,000 grant from the Ford Foundation.

Sir James Duff, a British teacher and administrator for more than 30 years, and Robert A. Berdahl, professor of government at San Francisco State College, have completed their study of the government structure of English and French-language universities and the findings are to be published next Friday.

Perhaps the most important question they have studied is the role of the faculty in university government. Should Canadian universities follow the tradition of universities elsewhere in the Commonwealth, where staff members play an important role in government, or should they follow the practice of U.S. institutions, where the separation of administration and faculty is carefully maintained?

Both faculty and administration at the University of Western Ontario are waiting anxiously but nervously for the Duff-Berdahl findings. The administration has indicated it will use the report as a philosophical guideline for the future.

Tension between faculty and administration is in no way a problem just at Western; it is a continuing growing pain for all Canadian universities. It appears, however, that Western has the most acute symptoms.

The man who has caused the most pain for the administration with a country club image is a lean, tweedy, middle-aged professor of political science, Dr. Henry Mayo, who is called a troublemaker and radical by his enemies, and a moderate by his friends.

Dr. Mayo dislikes the administration so much, especially G. Edward Hall, the smooth and evasive president of the university, that when he presented a brief to the Duff-Berdahl commission he refused to do so in the administration building because the atmosphere was emotionally unbearable.

The Fearless One, as Dr. Mayo has become known to his colleagues, said in a 31-page brief that the comfortable university of silver-grey Gothic buildings has a long, well-deserved reputation for parochialism, complacency and not very benevolent autocracy. "Correspondingly, the faculty as a group and often as individuals has been timid, suspicious, fearful and cynical."

Dr. Mayo has been sincerely disliked by the administration since a report on



Middlesex College, University of Western Ontario

his brief was carried in The Gazette, the student newspaper, in which he was identified sometimes as Prof. Y and sometimes as Prof. X. Administration officials believed the report was leaked to the paper to embarrass them, and they truly resented the X, Y cloak-and-dagger tactics.

Another, more significant report, was submitted to the Duff-Berdahl commission by the Faculty Association committee on university government.

The brief calls for a new name for the university — a reflection of faculty resentment of the London area establishment, which owns everything from the Hunt Club to the local cemeteries — a new board of governors that would be faculty-dominated, and the scrapping of the senate.

It charges Dr. Hall with surrounding himself with "yes men" accountable to him alone, which "isolates the faculty from the president and makes his decisions appear arbitrary and ill-founded."

"In a university as colorless as this one, with as little sense of community and inquiry as it has, the failure of the administration to respond to the new faculty enthusiasm and concern is no surprise."

The new faculty enthusiasm and concern is not really new at all. The professors are becoming increasingly discontented with the university government only because they are in a position to do so.

The timid professor of 10 years ago is a dying creature. No longer are professors prepared to suffer silently. Increasing numbers of younger men are becoming professors and they push harder and shout louder than their predecessors.

Another factor in the increasing discontent is that today, more than ever, university professors are in demand because of the opening of new universities. They know that if they get tired of one university they can move to another. The administration is equally aware of this new mobility.

The target for most of the faculty criticism at Western is Dr. Hall, 59, who was dean of the medical school before he became president 18 years ago. During an interview the bushy-browed, chain-smoking president, who suffered a heart attack last summer, was uneasy, sometimes evasive, and unhappy about the prospect of publicity.

Dr. Hall, who has been stubbornly silent in the past, answered the charge that he is paternalistic in his dealings with the faculty. "It would be a sad thing if a president were not concerned about the desires and ambitions of men in a com-

munity of scholars. But if it means cracking a whip, I deny that."

While Dr. Hall admitted that there has been a lack of communication between faculty and administration, he added: "There is a much better atmosphere today than there was two or three months ago. There is an increased attitude of trust and concern on both sides to solve the problems."

A number of interviews with members of the faculty showed a continuing attitude of distrust on their part, but they admitted that administration officials were starting to listen.

Proof of this was the establishment last September of a board of governors committee on faculty relations under the chairmanship of A. E. Shepherd, counsel for the commission looking into the affairs of Atlantic Acceptance Corp. Ltd.

Mr. Shepherd recently wrote a letter to Professor Walter Balderston, chairman of the Faculty Association, a quiet, mild-mannered historian. Administration officials contend he is easily led by the more militant faculty members.

"We simply must resolve, and at once, the question of the role of the Faculty Association. You ask to be recognized as the voice of the faculty. In respect to what matters?"

Mr. Shepherd wrote that if it were in respect to conditions of employment, such as salaries and pensions, there would be no difficulty. But if it were in respect to other matters, such as certain appointments or the establishment of a new library, there would be great difficulty.

"It is surely unfair to attack the board for failure to recognize you when you will not or cannot tell us what you mean by recognition."

Prof. Balderston wrote back that the faculty is trying to establish consultation with the board of governors on such matters as terms of employment, government and planning of the university, appointments, and any other area of general concern.

"Further attempts at definition seem futile," Prof. Balderston wrote. "It is in the very process of collaboration itself that the real roles of individuals and groups take shape and grow. At this university the process of collaboration has yet to begin."

And this is where faculty-administration relations stand today.

After the president and his assistants, the faculty most resents the board of governors, whose members, except for one, are businessmen and belong to London's elite and somewhat quaint establishment. The one, Harry Fraleigh, is

first vice-president of the London District Labor Council.

The most common criticism of the members of the board is — what do they know about education? But an even more serious criticism was made in the Faculty Association committee brief to the Duff-Berdahl commission.

It suggested conflict of interest on the board of governors. "Two members of the board, at least, are senior officers of the company which handles the university pension and insurance plans," the brief said.

The two members of the board not named in the brief are Joseph Jeffery and R. H. Reid, both of whom are associated with the London Life Insurance Co.

"I cannot understand the mind with the kind of thinking that would doubt such men as Mr. Jeffery and Mr. Reid, who were senior executives in insurance many years before they joined the board," said Col. Douglas B. Weldon, chairman of the board.

Col. Weldon, honorary chairman of Midland-Osler Securities Ltd., one of Canada's 10 largest investment firms, and a breeder of Aberdeen Angus cattle on a 750-acre farm near London, commented on the faculty reform movement. "I don't think it is important, but it is disturbing. It prevents co-operation. Is that a sensible answer?"

He also spoke in defense of Dr. Hall. "I would like to take this opportunity afforded me of expressing publicly complete confidence in Dr. Hall, president of the University of Western Ontario, and Mr. (Ross) Willis, vice-president of the university, and all other members of the administration."

On Tuesday, Premier John Roberts announced a new appointment to the board. He is John W. Adams, 42, vice-president of Emco Ltd., manufacturers of plumbers' and steamfitters' supplies in London. His appointment to the board is likely to bring a kind of perverse satisfaction to the more militant members of the faculty movement who were predicting their nominee for the board, Mr. Justice Bora Laskin, would not be accepted.

The faculty is disappointed with the students at Western who live a comfortable existence in their broadloomed dormitories and apparently have no desire or intention of rocking the boat one way or another. They have the distinction of being the only university student body in Canada that voted against free tuition.

But there are a few rebels left. Robert Blackwood, a fourth-year honors student who was one of two students this year to win a Woodrow Wilson fellowship, said the concept of academic freedom is really "news to the administration here."

Mr. Blackwood, tall, thin and extremely nervous, said that as long as he has been on the University Student Council the faculty has received little support from the students. He quoted a past president of the student council who accused the faculty of wanting to be both union and management.

Another student, James Schefer, editor of The Gazette, sat behind his small desk in the student newspaper office, surveyed his busy Playboy centre-spread pin-ups, and said: "They have operated this university just like a big business. What do they know about education?" He said the administration has gone on for years without considering the faculty and students.

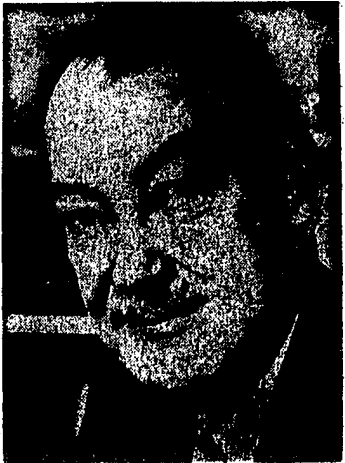
The faculty view of the administration officials, in Prof. Balderston's words, is that "they think in terms of the Nineteenth Century. They have a corporation attitude, they are conservative emotionally and philosophically, and they probably wanted to see how far they could go in pushing us."

The administration view of the faculty appears to be: "What do they want?"

And the view of the Duff-Berdahl commission? Both faculty and administration, perhaps for different reasons, are keeping their fingers crossed.



Henry B. Mayo



Dr. G. Edward Hall